

Children and Families
Commission

Learning Conversation

January 30, 2006

Placer County Office of Education
Special Education

**First Five Funds
Placer County Office of Education
January 30, 2006**

Outcomes:

Infant - preschool special education teacher and support staff evaluated classroom instructional needs in the following areas:

- **Communication** - students enrolled in the Communication Delays & Disorders, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Functional Skills, Autism spectrum Disorders, and Severely Disabled classrooms evidence severe deficits in the area of communication; expressive or receptive language, articulation, auditory processing and/or pragmatics. Students enrolled in the Functional Skills, Severely Disabled and Autism Spectrum Disorders programs also present a need in the area of communication.
- **Self-Help** - students enrolled in the Functional Skills, Severely Disabled and Autism Spectrum Disorders programs evidence delays in the areas of independent living skills and social/emotional behavior.
- **Motor** - students enrolled in all four programs evidence delays in the area of motor development.
- **Pre-academics** – students enrolled in the Communication Delays & Disorders, Functional Skills and Autism Spectrum Disorders programs evidence delays in reading and writing readiness skill development.

Strategies:

Classroom needs assessment and funding requests were completed, reviewed and approved. Items were purchased in the Fall 2005.

Performance Measures:

- **Demographics** – Please see attached table.
- **Effectiveness** –
 - The switch toys and enabling devices that were purchased are currently being utilized successfully in the classroom to address instructional goals. They are highly motivating and are used to teach cause and effect relationships, increase attention span and time on tasks. They are also used to motivate students to attempt large motor activities such as sitting and standing. These instructional toys and adaptations bypass delayed motor components and allow our students to explore and learn through active play. Many of these readiness skills generalize to other skills required for participation at home and in the community.
 - Books on tape were used to encourage language development and understanding. To address the self-help, motor and pre-academic needs of the students, manipulatives and simple hands-on activities were used to maximize growth. Play based learning is an important part of the overall preschool program as special needs children often require direct instruction in this area.

- Language/Motor Skill Games have been effective in combining much needed support in the provision of Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy so as to further reinforce students' goals and enhance development. These games help to facilitate communication about consistent daily themes. Targeted skills include Following Directions, Grammar, Phonemic Awareness, Answering Questions and Vocabulary Development. Vocabulary cards are particularly helpful in expanding thematic vocabulary.

- Augmentative communication devices are motivating and give confidence to non-verbal students. These devices also foster cooperation, reduce behavior problems by refining communication choice and encourage interaction with staff and other children.

- Handwriting Without Tears and Autism Language Activities have increased the opportunities for students to develop reading and writing readiness skills.

- The 'Classroom Library' has helped to develop correct language usage. The students hear stories read to them each day and are able to check out books to take home and share with their families. Many times students will practice 'reading' a book and want to show their parents. Language activities are created around the books. Following is an example of a language activity utilizing the purchased material:

- During circle time we read What Snowmen Do At Night, by. (Standard Listening and Speaking K 1.3)
- We talked about the different parts of the book. (Standard Reading K 1.1)
- After the story the students were asked "wh" who, what, where, why questions. (Standard Reading K 2.5)
- We sequenced what happened to the snowman at night. (Standard Listening and Speaking K 2.3)
- The students shared what they would do if they were a snowman. (Standard Listening and Speaking K 1.2)
- Next the students were asked to draw a picture of what their snowman may do at night. Each child drew a picture and verbally illustrated it. (Standard Oral and Written Language K 1.1)
- The following day the same "wh" questions were ask to check retention. (Standard Reading K 2.5)

- Tactile and sensory motor equipment have allowed students to experience and address sensory and motor planning challenges. Sensory items are used promote and develop the children's physical ability, manual dexterity, and eye-hand coordination. While using the equipment, language concepts are stressed and become "real" as the children act-out and experience language (e.g., on, under, through). The purchased equipment has provided the children opportunities to problem solve and follow a motor sequence. This increases their abilities in self-help and independent living skills.

- Adapted scoop plates, utensils, scissors, and craft supplies allow students with limited fine motor control to develop fine motor skills and increase independence in an integrated setting. Often these items such as the utensil holder are utilized for a variety of fine motor skills, i.e. holding a pencil, spoon or paint brush.
- The toilet specifically designed for students with physical disabilities has been effectively utilized in the classroom. Students often have a toileting goal or have parents who have suggested this as a goal. Students are able to utilize the system with appropriate support for their bodies. This allows students to void appropriately while students also learn the correct posture for sitting and strengthen their trunk, neck and head. The student is able to perform a very personal and private function without assistance and is able to feel more in control of themselves and their environment. This also boosts parents or caregivers morale as they are able to watch their child reach a developmental milestone.
- The ‘Maclaren Major Positioning Push Chair’ enables non-ambulatory children to participate in community outings. This encourages social interaction and inclusiveness in the program for all students.

Sustainability:

The availability of these materials within the classrooms have provided staff with the opportunity to further assess student needs and target specific skill deficit areas. The material and related activities will continue to be utilized with other and newly enrolled students evidencing similar needs as the current project participants. Further, it is felt that this project has provided staff with a “bank” of effective learning tools, and thereby reduce the costs associated with the purchase of materials that do not provide the intended results.

It is felt that this project can be sustained through the utilization of other available funding sources; and therefore, PCOE will not be requesting funding for year three of this project.

Evaluation:

- Baseline data to determine material effectiveness has been collected. Data reflecting effectiveness in achieving objectives will be presented at the next Learning Conversation.

Purpose

- To enhance and enrich instructional service for students with moderate to severe disabilities in PCOE Special Education programs:
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder Program
 - Communication Delays and Disorders Program
 - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program
 - Functional Skills Program
 - Severely Multiple Disabilities Program

PCOE Mission Statement

With a commitment to excellence, the Placer County Office of Education Special Education staff accepts the charge to promote cognitive, academic, social and physical development of students through specialized instruction and service, as well as, collaboration with families and the greater community.

Needs Assessment

- Teachers evaluated classroom needs in the areas of:
 - Communication
 - Self-Help
 - Motor
 - Pre-academics
- Evaluations were based upon IEP goals, and Teacher Collaboration with Support Staff; Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists and Psychologists.

Outcome: Children's Progress Towards Goal Areas

25 - Communication **12- Motor** **1- Self Help**

12 Met **6 Met** **1 Met**

12 Progressing **3 Progressing**

1 Transitional **3 Transitional**



Our Cloud 9 motor chair requires communication and motor negotiation between children to find a comfortable spot.

Outcome:

Four out of 7 preschool DHH children have severe sensory and motor planning issues. Until these issues are addressed, it is difficult for them to make progress in the other three content areas. These activities also benefit other members of our class.





Outcome: Children will learn cause and effect relationships, increase attention span, time on tasks and be motivated to increase sitting and standing.

Communication Goals: 9 Children
Sitting Goals: 2 Children
Standing & Walking Goals: 5 Children
Reciprocal Play Goals: 2 Children

- **Communication:**

While using the equipment language concepts are stressed and become “real” as the children experience language: on, under, through . . .



The tactile balance beam helps motor planning and creates a language experience and opportunity for new language concepts.

- Outcome:

The 'MacClaren Major Positioning Push Chair' allows children who are not ambulatory, but do not have a wheelchair yet, to participate in community outings. This encourages social interaction and inclusiveness in the program for all children.



The 'Classroom Library' has helped to develop correct language usage. The children hear stories read to them each day and are able to check out books to take home and share with their families.





Many times children will practice 'reading' a book and want to show their parents. Language activities are created around the books.

- **Self Help**

Activities using the equipment purchased through the grant improve fine and gross motor skills, coordination and motor planning which improves students self help skills: toileting, dressing, feeding



Colored spot markers challenge gross motor and planning skills which gives the children opportunity to problem solve and figure out how they can move their body in a given sequence. This increases their ability in the areas of self help skills such as the motor sequence for toileting skills.

Goal: Greater Independence for Children and Parents



I would recommend this item for classrooms and parents for children with severe disabilities.

Self Help: Child is able to perform a very personal and private function without assistance.

Pre-Academic: Allows for a greater sense of independence, which then can be transferred to academic and functional activities as they become more successful.

Outcome: Child has started to make substantial progress and is now on track to meeting her toileting goals.

Children learn about
cause and effect by
using switches to
activate toys.



Zoie is practicing her standing skills and cause and effect skills playing with vibrating switch while in her stander.





Alec is using the Compact Activity Center for exploratory play which provides visual, auditory and tactile stimulation.



Emma is using the Crawl -Through Bead Chain and the Textured Carousel Busy Box to keep her busy while she is practices sitting.

William is practicing his mobility skills by pulling himself to stand to play with the textured Carousel Busy Box.



- **Motor Skills**

Through collaboration with our occupational therapy staff, equipment to be purchased was decided upon that would allow traditionally “therapy oriented” activities to be incorporated into daily curriculum.



Squishy balls help fine motor skills which in turn improve coordination of sign language production and pre-writing skills. With improved motor skills our children are becoming more successful in other content areas as well.

- Pre-academics:

After performing these motor related activities, children are more apt to be “ready” and focused for academic instruction. Children have been improving in their school skills such as language circle.



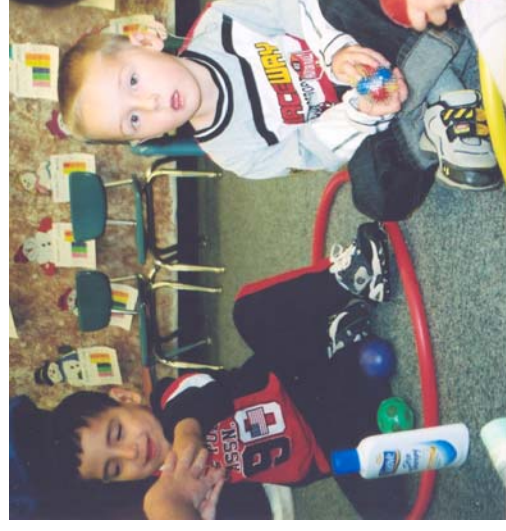
Demographics

Sixty-eight Children

- **Gender:**
 - 54 Males, 14 Females
- **Ethnicity:**
 - 2 Alaskan Native/American Indian
 - 1 Asian
 - 1 African American
 - 7 Hispanic
 - 51 White
 - 6 Other
- **Age:**
 - 22 Children are 3 years old
 - 20 Children are 4 years old
 - 26 Children are 5 years old

Materials Purchased

- Resistance Tunnel
- Economy Scooters
- Tactile Balls
- Cloud Nine Large Motor Chair
- Utility Sequence Spot Markers
- Tactile Balance Beam
- Bumble Ball
- Glitter Bugs



•Sensory/Visual Stimulation Materials

- Bubble Machine
- Communication
Switches & Toys
- Rifton Blue Wave
Toileting System



More Materials Purchased . . .

- Over 100 books for Classroom Library
- Art Materials
- Song & Rhyme Activities
- Storytelling Books & Activity Kit
- Listening Center
- Tactile Equipment

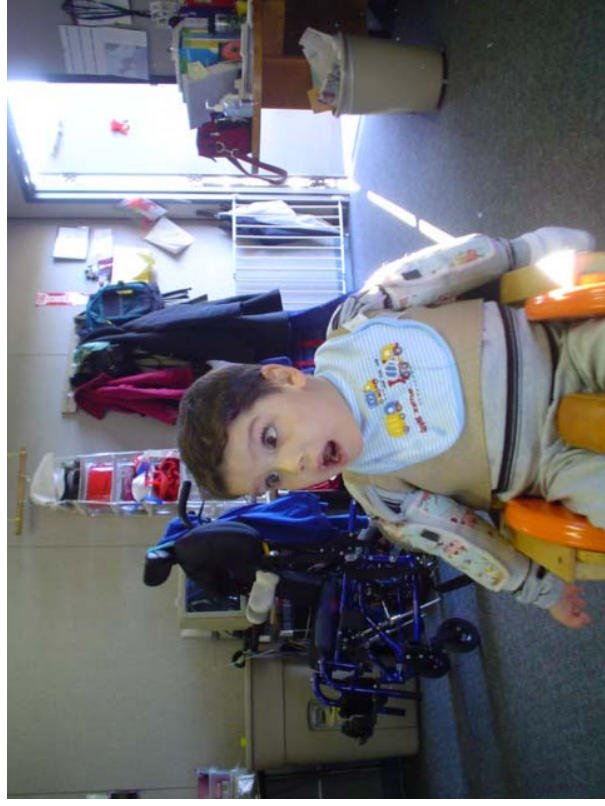
- Reading & Writing Readiness Activities



Sustainability

- The availability of these materials within the classrooms have provided staff with the opportunity to further assess student needs and target specific skill deficit areas.
- The material and related activities will continue to be utilized with other and newly enrolled students evidencing similar needs as the current project participants.
- Further, it is felt that this project has provided staff with a “bank” of effective learning tools, and thereby reduce the costs associated with the purchase of materials that do not provide the intended results.

Thank you First Five!



PCOE Special Education Materials - Areas of Use

Materials	Communication	Self-Help	Motor	Pre-Academics
Add & Subtract Math Mats				X
Adapted Alphabet School Bus	X		X	X
Autism & PDD Concepts	X	X		X
Autism & PDD Yes/No Questions	X	X		X
Autism & PDD: Early Intervention Time to Be Healthy	X	X		X
Autism & PDD: Picture Stories & Language Activities	X	X		X
Battery Scissors		X	X	X
Body Sock		X	X	X
Bumble Ball			X	X
Carousel Busy Box			X	X
Catch Net		X	X	X
Class Room Library	X			X
Classroom Classics Read Along	X			X
Classroom Time Clock	X	X		X
Color Bean Bag Set			X	X
Color Morph Tactile Balls			X	
Compact Activity Center		X	X	X
Cookie Sheet Magnetic Math Series			X	X
Counting Cakes			X	X
Crawl-Through Bead Chain			X	
Crystal Beads			X	
Design Dough Stampers			X	X
Dual Cassette Player	X		X	X
Early Language Concept Kit- Category Sorting	X	X		X
Early Language Concept Kit- Matching	X	X		X
Five Little Ducks	X			X
Fling & Fly Bean Bag & Target	X		X	X
Glitter Bugs	X		X	X
Glitter Roll Music Box	X		X	
Gumdrop Switch	X	X	X	X
Hands Down Game	X		X	X
Handwriting Without Tears Materials	X			X
Help-Yourself Bookstand		X		X
Hug & Learn Baby	X		X	
Italk	X	X		X
Jester Bear	X		X	
Let's Tackle Patterning & Sequencing Kit	X	X	X	X
Letter Stencils	X			X
Literacy Box Bugs	X			X
Literacy Box Pets	X			X
Literacy Box Sea Life	X			X
Literacy Box Seasons	X			X
MaClaren Major Positioning Push Chair		X	X	
Magic Board Printing Practice Cards	X			X
Magic Board Printing Practice Cards	X			X
Manuscript Stamps	X			X
Magic Sound Blocks	X		X	X
Mini Streamer Set			X	
Moods & Emotions Poster Pack	X	X		X
Number-O-Sauras	X			X

PCOE Special Education Materials - Areas of Use

Old MacDonald	X			X
Pal Play & Learn	X			X
Pediatric Utensil Holder		X	X	X
Plate Switch		X	X	X
Play Tunnel			X	
Pre-Writing Motor Skills Board	X			X
Read & Sign Paperback Collection	X			X
Read Along Listening Center	X			X
Read with Me! Sing -Along	X			X
Rifton Blue Wave Toilet System		X	X	X
Roll & Count	X			X
School Bus	X		X	X
Scooper Plate		X	X	
Seasons & Holiday Language Games	X		X	X
Shapes Learning Center	X		X	X
Singing Barney	X		X	X
Snow Mobility	X		X	X
Songs & Rhymes Activity Series	X		X	X
Sound Puzzle Box	X		X	X
Stay Put Scoop Plate		X	X	
Step-By-Step with Levels	X		X	X
Stretch Inside Out Ball			X	X
Super Dough Machines	X		X	X
Switch Train	X		X	X
Tactile Curved Balance Beam			X	X
Tactile Straight Balance Beam			X	X
Talking Symbols	X			X
Textured Feel & Find	X		X	X
The Very Hungry Caterpillar Activity Kit	X		X	X
The Very Hungry Caterpillar Book	X		X	X
This Old Man Book	X		X	X
This Old Man Storytelling Doll	X		X	X
Three Bears	X		X	X
Time to Sing	X		X	X
Velcro-On Room Divider	X			X
Vibrating Mini Saucer Switch	X		X	X
Wiggle Giggle Ball	X		X	X